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G/TIP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/22/2018
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [GR](#)
SUBJECT: GREEK MFA IN SHOCK OVER TIP TIER DOWNGRADING

Classified By: AMBASSADOR DANIEL SPECKHARD. REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) On May 22, Ambassador met with MFA SecGen Agathocles at the latter's request to discuss Greece's tier ranking on Trafficking in Persons (TIP). Although information on tier classifications for this year has not yet been publicly released, Agathocles was aware that Greece would likely be downgraded from Tier Two to Tier-Two Watchlist. He said this was a shock, since Greece had expected to be upgraded to Tier One. Admitting no wrong-doing in terms of Greece's performance on TIP issues, Agathocles attributed Greece's downgrading to a failure of communications. Greece had good statistics, he argued, but "I would be the first to admit that we have been slow in providing details." Agathocles conceded that it was probably too late this year to change Greece's tier ranking but nevertheless provided Ambassador a non-paper entitled "Actions by the Government of the Hellenic Republic to Combat Trafficking in Persons," which he said Greek Ambassador to the U.S. Mallias had also provided to Department.

¶2. (C) Agathocles argued that there had been more arrests and convictions than had been reflected in the data provided earlier, saying that rather than two convictions the real number was more than 100. (NOTE: We did not find this reflected in the non-paper. END NOTE.) In any case, Agathocles promised that next year, data would be provided on time.

¶3. (C) Ambassador noted our perception that part of the problem for the GOG in dealing with TIP issues was the lack of a single senior TIP coordinator to oversee inter-agency efforts. Agathocles agreed and said that he had already appointed the director of his office, Amb. Alexios Zannos, as the new TIP coordinator for the MFA. Ambassador acknowledged this as a good step but suggested that for a TIP coordinator to be most effective he or she might have to come from the Prime Minister's office. Ambassador also noted the importance of effective PR in combating TIP and offered U.S. assistance in providing television programs and anti-TIP commercials. Agathocles said the GOG had discussed programs and commercials but found that air time was prohibitively expensive. He said Greece also wished to do training and seminars for police officers, prosecutors, and judges but, again, complained about the lack of funding. Agathocles concluded by promising to "pressurize" the other ministries to do better on TIP issues. He said he would speak to FM Bakoyannis about "shaking up" other ministries. The Ambassador promised to help in any way he could to urge additional funding and support from other agencies on this critical issue.

COMMENT

¶4. (C) Agathocles did not link Greece's downgrading on tier designation to a supposed American retribution for Greek behavior on the Macedonia name issue, as we expect the Greek

press to do when announcement of Greece's tier position is made public. But his message in terms of the substance of GOG performance on TIP was disappointingly too little, too late. He admitted no Greek shortcoming other than in not providing data earlier. Still, we want to take him at his word that the GOG will make better efforts this year, and post will work with new coordinator Amb Zannos as he develops a GOG gameplan.

SPECKHARD